

Biosecurity Practices for Swine Validation - A Checklist

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Introduction

Comingling of pigs and equipment from different sources can often result in transmission of pathogens from one pig to another. The livestock exhibitor faces an inherent risk of disease transmission each time a novel person (visitor to farm, CEA on a project visit, veterinarian, etc.) comes into contact with that animal, or any time that the animal leaves the premises. Mitigating the risk of disease transmission at validation is the role of both the validation committee and the youth exhibitor. The following steps will aid in decreasing the risk of disease transmission at a comingling event such as validation.

Prior to Validation:

- Provide education to exhibitors on biosecurity practices**
See “Biosecurity Practices for Swine Exhibitors: A Checklist”. Provide copies to exhibitors at validation. Include in clinics, newsletters, etc.
- Training the Validation Committee**
Conduct a 15-20 minute orientation of biosecurity practices for entire committee. Make sure everyone understands protocols. Insist that any volunteer who is not feeling well refrain from participating in validation.
- Encourage exhibitors and families not to participate in validation if they are ill**
Include this information in newsletters and other informational outlets concerning validation.
- Notify exhibitors to not bring sick pigs to validation – Do not validate sick pigs**
Include this information in newsletters and other informational outlets concerning validation.
- Develop alternative validation protocol for sick pigs**
Exhibitors may bring sick pigs to validation because they may feel that it is their only chance to be validated. Consider an alternative and notify exhibitors of that alternative prior to validation day. Follow biosecurity steps at alternative site.
- Develop protocol for pigs arriving that appear ill**
Assign one committeeman or volunteer to inspect each trailer upon arrival. If an exhibitor arrives at validation with pigs that appear ill for any reason, including, but not limited to: coughing or other respiratory illness, diarrhea, mange, etc. have a protocol developed to isolate the sick pigs from others. Consider validating these animals using the alternative validation protocol.

At Validation:

- Conduct validation on a hard surface lot**
This provides maximum air flow, and decreases potential transmission.
- Encourage space between trailers**
Have a volunteer control traffic flow, keeping adequate (at least 12 feet) space between trailers.
- Discourage exhibitors and parents from coming in contact with animals that are not their own**
Keep exhibitors and parents as confined to the area around their trailer as possible.
- Do not allow any pigs to leave their trailer**
Validate pigs in the trailer/truck that they arrive in. Do not allow animals on the ground.
- Encourage exhibitors or parents to enter trailer and bring pigs to committee**
Encourage exhibitors or parents to handle the pigs while the committee completes validation process.
- Gloves, foot covers**
Committee members should wear disposable gloves, changing gloves between each trailer/group of pigs. Disposable shoe covers or plastic boots should also be used if committee enters a trailer.
- Provide appropriate signage for parents and exhibitors**
Consider wording such as: “NOTICE: Frequent hand washing is recommended in livestock areas” and “To maintain the health of your animals, please refrain from contact with animals that are not your own”. Should also be used at show.
- Clean and disinfect equipment between animals**
Clean ear taggers, hair pliers, etc. with a small, stiff brush and place in trays filled with disinfectant. Allow equipment to soak at least 10 minutes in disinfectant before reusing. This may require additional equipment.
- Provide hand washing stations, antibacterial gel**
Provide an adequate supply of antibacterial hand washing gel along with signage.
- Provide education to exhibitors on biosecurity practices**
See “Biosecurity Practices for Swine Exhibitors: A Checklist”. Provide copies to exhibitors at validation. Include in clinics, newsletters, etc.